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WIDOW OLIVE STOW HOUSE

Historic Structures Report

Part II

Historical Data Section

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Minute Man National Historical Park

Massachusetts

March 2, 1973

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INTRODUCTION

The Widow Olive Stow house has been designated an historic structure because it was part of the background to the events of April 19, 1775. Intensive research has revealed no significant role played by the house or its occupants on that day. It is generally accepted locally that the house was standing even before¹ 1775.

The purpose of my research has been to substantiate local tradition, to validate the age of the house, and to uncover any information relating to the structures on the property, hereinafter² called Lot 32. Unfortunately, the last and most important goal proved the hardest to realize because of the dearth of documentation on a house of no historical significance other than antiquity. Due to that lack, the body of this report will be necessarily brief, and will be accompanied by a detailed bibliography.

However, this report does succeed, I believe, in fixing the age of the house, with one reservation which will appear in its proper place, and in establishing its occupants on April 19, 1775. And it does provide starting points for further archeological and architectural investigation.

¹
Mrs. Ruth Wheeler, local historian, believes the house dates from the early 18th century.

²
In this report Lot 32 will refer to the Stow houselot of ten to twenty acres. The reason for this variation in the acreage is probably that prior to 1834 the ten acres of meadow adjoining the houselot itself was considered a separate entity and after that date part of the houselot. The lot number is from the Master Plan.

BACKGROUND: THE STOWS IN CONCORD

The first Stow in Concord was Nathaniel, an early settler and a landowning non-freeman.³ But the first deed in which he figures as grantee was not recorded until 1681, legally conveying land which he had bought from William Fletcher prior to 1656.⁴ This land comprised a house and a fifteen acre houselot in the Mill Brook area, as well as several other fields, including sixteen acres in the Elm Brook meadow.⁵ By the time Nathaniel Stow died in 1684 he owned numerous plots along both the north and south sides of Lexington Road but only this one house which he willed to his son Ebenezer.⁶ To his other son, Nathaniel, Jr., he willed several undescribed,

³ Ruth Wheeler, Concord: Climate for Freedom, (Concord Antiquarian Society, 1967), p. 15.

NOTE: Nathaniel Stow, Jr., was voted a freeman in 1689. (Massachusetts Archives, Vol. 35, p. 352).

⁴ Concord Town Records, Vol. I, Part II, p. 305a.

⁵ Ibid., Vol. I, Part II, p. 305b.

⁶ Nathaniel Stow Probate, Vol. VI, pp. 236-38.

NOTE: In the past the Mill Brook house has been confused with the Widow Olive Stow house. So in order to eliminate this house from consideration, thereby avoiding confusion, I traced its ownership in the Middlesex Registry of Deeds. In 1704 Ebenezer sold it to his brother Nathaniel (Book 14, p. 291). Nathaniel deeded it to his son Joseph in 1719 (Book 26, p. 135) who in turn sold it to one Eleazar Melvin in 1725 (Book 25, p. 499). Hereafter in the footnotes, book and page references are deeds in the Registry). The house never returned to Stow hands.

unimproved fields of upland, meadow, and pasture. ⁷

The 1684 will left Nathaniel Stow, Jr., with extensive land in the Elm Brook and Brick Kiln area, but no dwelling on this property. The bounds of his inherited lands are not described in the will, and the usual designations are by the names of those from whom Nathaniel Sr. had bought the parcels. There are no deeds in existence which record these early sales either in the Registry or in any of Concord's records, and more often than not the bounds are incompletely described in the early deeds.

Yet I am convinced that Nathaniel Jr. inherited, and did not buy, the land on which the Stow house stands. Although there are no extant deeds in which Nathaniel Senior or Junior figure as grantees to support this contention, two telling pieces of external evidence do. First, as early as 1664 Nathaniel Stow, Sr., is cited as a western abutter of what is now known as the "Taylor lot" in a deed of conveyance from Timothy Wheeler to Gershom Brooks. ⁸ There is also a 1666 description of one of Joshua Brooks's lots, four acres of "swamp" bounded southerly on the "bay way" and lying between the Stow property on the west and the Brooks property on the

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Ibid.

8

Book 4, p. 459.

9
east. These documents put the Stows squarely on Lot 32 as early as the mid-1660's.

THE STOW HOUSE IS BUILT

So it seems safe to say that in 1684 Nathaniel Stow, Jr., inherited Lot 32 and that no building stood on it at that time. But a house did stand on the property by 1689. This is confirmed in the deed by which Thomas Woolly sold the four acres of "swamp", mentioned above as belonging to Joshua Brooks, to Nathaniel Stow, Jr. The land is described as "being in the East Quarter of the Town of Concord near the said Nathaniel Stow's house and is bounded on the west southwest by the Country Road way and on the south southeast by the land of Gershom Brooks, and on the north northwest on the land of Nathaniel Stow...." Lexington Road runs in a south southeasterly direction at this point and we know that Gershom Brooks was the eastern abutter of the Stow property at that time. It can be safely

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Concord Town Records, Vol. I, Part I, p. 190a.

NOTE: Nathaniel Stow, Jr., bought this land from Thomas Woolly in 1689 (Book 25, p. 380) and deeded it to his son John in 1717 (Book 23, p. 439). In 1755 Timothy Wesson owned it (Book 49, p. 66) and later Jacob Taylor somehow acquired it for in the 1768 Taylor Probate Ephraim Potter received the lot. (Probate #22191). In 1786 the Potters sold it to John Meriam (Book 95, p. 166) who sold it to Ebenezer Hardy two years later (Book 98, p. 354). After Hardy lost it in execution of a judgment in 1822 (Book 239, p.p. 339-52) it apparently was never again part of Lot-32.

10

Book 25, p. 380.

concluded, then, that a house was constructed on Lot 32 between 1684 and 1689 by Nathaniel Stow, Jr.

But there is a problem here. The Woolly to Stow deed implies that the house was near the southeast corner of the property in 1689. This placement is reinforced by the 1720 survey of the new road leading from Lexington Road north northeast to Brick Kiln Island. This road "Begins at the Country Road, and at the southeast corner of John Jones house lot, running partly north across on the most easterly side of said lot next Nathanael Stows...and^{ll} then it runs straight forward across Nathanael Stows lot...."

There may be no significance to the fact that the selectmen termed the Jones land a "house lot" and the Stow land simply "lot". On the other hand this wording could signify that John Jones's house stood close to the proposed Brick Kiln Island Way and Nathaniel Stow's did not. These two documents combine to suggest one of two possibilities, either that the house was moved to the higher ground at the west side of the lot, or that it was entirely rebuilt in its present location. Aside from a complete lack of evidence even hinting at the latter possibility, the former is strengthened by the fact that moving houses was common in colonial times.

There is no description of the house or other structures on the property in Nathaniel Stow's time. But we do have hints. We

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Concord Town Records, Vol. I, Part II, p. 362b.

learn from the 1715/16 survey undertaken to widen Lexington Road that a fence and a gate bordered the property along that road and that a stone wall stood between the Stow lot and that of his eastern abutter, Daniel Brooks. The gate, fence, and wall each formed a station in the survey.¹² In addition there were other, undescr¹³ibed buildings on the lot, at least by 1725. It is likely that there was a barn and at least one shed because Nathaniel Stow¹⁴ was a farmer and owned livestock, a plow, and other farm implements.

JOSEPH STOW ERA

The "old homestead", the ten acre houselot which included meadow and upland, and the other buildings, valued together at 175¹⁵ pounds, were inherited by Nathaniel Stow's son Joseph. Of Nathaniel Jr.'s six surviving sons only three inherited land, the other heirs accepting cash settlements, which seems to indicate that only the three were farmers.¹⁶ Although Joseph Stow taught school during the winter months, for which he was paid by the town,¹⁷ it seems

¹² Ibid., Vol. I, Part II, p. 360a.

¹³ Nathaniel Stow Probate #21772, Item #9.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., Item #9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Concord Town Records, Vol. III, Part I, pp. 47a, 59a, 63a, 83b, 121a; Vol. III, Part II, pp. 160b, 202a, 202b, 226a, 260b, 290a, 304b, 330a, 355a; Vol. IV, Part I, pp. 14b, 33b, 101b.

fairly certain from the inventory of his estate taken in 1772 that
18
he was primarily a farmer. This inventory gives some clue as to
the structures on the property. There was a barn, valued with the
19
house at 26 pounds 13 shillings 4 pence. There was probably a
shed on the property to house the farm implements listed in the
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inventory.

There are also some clues as to the rooms in the house from
the inventory of Joseph Stow's personal estate. Included in this
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inventory were three sets of "Bed and furniture", which suggests
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the possibility of at least two "chambers". The inventory also

18
Joseph Stow Probate #21765. And see Concord Archives, Box I,
1748 County Assessment.

19
Joseph Stow Probate #21765.
NOTE: This plus the 60 pound valuation of the house lot brings
the total valuation to considerably less than the 1725 valuation.
This reduction was due to a devaluation of the currency around 1740.
For a period of about ten years the Town Records distinguish the
"old tenour" from the new. (e.g. Vol. IV, p. 33b).

20

Ibid.

21

Ibid.

NOTE: No source defines the term "furniture" in this context,
but based on information from the Concord Antiquarian, I infer that
it was part of the bedstead itself, that it meant some of the
appurtenances of the bedstead.

22

NOTE: Admittedly, the colonial yeoman family did not always
differentiate between sleeping chambers per se and any other room
in the house. It would not have been particularly unusual to find
a bed in what was otherwise a sitting room, or even in the kitchen.

lists kitchen implements, two tables, and two sets of chairs, which
indicates that the house also included a kitchen and one other room.²³
The likely conclusion is that the house was typical four-room
colonial, supporting this conclusion is that nowhere is the house
referred to as a "mansion house" which could suggest a somewhat
larger dwelling.

1775

After Joseph Stow's death in 1772 at the age of 60, his
widow, Olive Stow, and John Jones²⁴ were appointed guardians of
her two minor children,²⁵ Sarah, born June 10, 1760, and Nathaniel,
²⁶ born March 28, 1762. From this time until 1782 there is a gap
in the documentary evidence relating to both the house and its
occupants. But several facts support the conclusion that Olive
Stow and her two children lived in the house in 1775. First, the
Joseph Stow Probate reveals that the farm was solvent, that there

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Ibid.

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NOTE: This was Olive, nee Jones, Stow's brother who died in
1772 at the age of 54. (Concord Births, Marriages, Deaths, 1635-1850,
p. 436; Probate #21767, Item #6).

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Nathaniel Stow Probate #21766.

26

Concord Births, Marriages, Deaths, 1635-1850, pp. 209, 216.
(Hereafter abbreviated to CBMD).

were no debts outstanding against the estate, that there was cash on hand, and that the Stows were creditors of several people, among them Olive's brother, Farwell, who owed as much as 15 pounds.²⁷

Olive Stow was appointed administratrix, so no fee would be sub-²⁸

tracted from the estate for administration. As co-guardian John Jones would bear part of the financial responsibility for the children.

In short, there was no immediate financial reason for Olive Stow to leave her home and take refuge elsewhere. She did not remarry, probably because she was 48 years old at the time of her husband's death²⁹ and beyond, or at least close to the end of, her childbearing

years. Her daughter Sarah could not have married until well after April 19, 1775 since she was not yet 15 years old on that date.³⁰

The house did not pass out of Stow hands until 1828.³¹ The force of these combined facts strongly points to the presence of Joseph Stow's family in the house on April 19, 1775.

²⁷ Joseph Stow Probate #21765.

²⁸ Probate #21767.

²⁹ CBMD, p. 119.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 209.

NOTE: It became apparent in reading through the CBMD that it was unusual in colonial times for women to marry much before the age of 20 years. And it was the normal procedure for colonial families to begin producing children in short order. Sarah Stow Hardy had her first child in 1782 (CBMD, p. 254) so it is not likely that she was married before 1780 at the earliest.

³¹ Book 334, p. 182.

THE HARDY ERA

The next document referring to Lot 32 is a 1786 deed conveying the "Taylor lot" to Ephraim Potter, in which the western abutter is Ebenezer Hardy.³² Who is this Hardy and when did he enter the scene? Neither question has an easy answer. Ebenezer Hardy was a native of Concord³³ born about 1761.³⁴ There is a strong possibility that he was a private in Captain Pollard's Minuteman Company engaged in the skirmishes along the Battle Road on April 19, 1775.³⁵ Ultimately he married Sarah Stow, thereby acquiring a third interest in the Stow property.³⁶ Since there is no record of their marriage³⁶ we cannot pinpoint the date of that event. However, Ebenezer Hardy was

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³² Book 95, p. 165.

³³ Concord Free Library, Special Collections, Post 1850 Deaths, See card on the death of Sumner Hardy.

³⁴ CBMD gives the date of his death as 1826, at the age of 65.

³⁵ Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, (Boston: Wright and Potter, State Printers, 1907), Vol. VII, p. 273.

³⁶ NOTE: There is no record of this marriage in the CBMD or any other source. But there is other evidence. The age of Sarah Hardy, deceased in 1835, corresponds to that of Sarah Stow, born 1760 (CBMD, pp. 349, 209). After Ebenezer Hardy's death his third interest in the Stow property reverted to her, at least by 1834 when we find her selling it. (Book 334, pp. 185-86). The inventory of the Sarah Hardy estate includes "The balance of the Nathaniel Stow estate...." (Probate #10342) left in the hands of his guardian, Nathan Brooks, after Stow died heirless in 1832 (Probate #21780).

on the Stow property by 1782, taking on the responsibility of caring for his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Stow, declared non compos³⁷
mentis that year.

In 1822 Ebenezer Hardy lost almost all of his property in Concord in payment of an accumulation of debts. In one such execution of a judgment against him he is forced to deed his third interest in Lot 32, which he held "during the time of said Hardy's life and no longer,"³⁸ to one Silas Piper of Acton. A few months later Silas Piper sold his interest to Abel Moore, a businessman of Concord, and in this deed Piper states that Hardy had "improved" the property in some unspecified way.³⁹ Here the trail runs cold, but the third interest found its way back into Sarah Hardy's hands for we find her⁴⁰ selling it in 1834 to the firm of Rice and Merrian.

³⁷
NOTE: The selectmen of Concord petitioned the Court to have a guardian appointed for Nathaniel Stow in 1782, and Timothy Jones was duly appointed (Probate #21778). There is no record of the length of his guardianship but later that same year Ebenezer Hardy legally obligated himself, along with Olive Stow, "To provide for him, the said Nathaniel, during his natural life...." (Concord Town Archives, Box 3, 1782). The Federal Census Records suggest that he fulfilled the obligation until at least 1820. (Boston Public Library, Microfilm, Federal Census of 1790, Roll 1, 1800, Roll 17, 1810, Roll 20, 1820, Roll 51). It must be noted, however, that the role of legal guardian differed from that of legal provider.

³⁸

Book 239, p. 324.

NOTE: This tenure reinforces the conclusion that Hardy received his third interest as a result of his marriage to Sarah Stow.

³⁹

Book 243, p. 220.

⁴⁰

Book 334, pp. 185-86.

Prior to 1834 when the property left the hands of the last surviving Stow, the other heirs of Joseph Stow had died, Olive in 1811⁴¹ and Nathaniel in 1832.⁴² A new legal guardian, Nathan Brooks, banker and businessman of Concord, had been appointed for Nathaniel Stow in 1827.⁴³ In their petition to the court, the selectmen of Concord stated that Nathaniel Stow was "possessed of real estate of considerable value."⁴⁴ But due to the accumulation of debts against the estate, Nathan Brooks had to auction off Stow's two-thirds interest in order to pay them. The inventory taken at this time mentions "a house, barn, and other buildings."⁴⁵ This property was purchased at the auction by Isaac Hardy, son of Sarah and Ebenezer.⁴⁶ Isaac Hardy was born in 1786⁴⁷ and died just before his mother.⁴⁸ It is interesting to note that he was one of the creditors of the Stow estate, presenting a bill for the boarding of Nathaniel Stow

⁴¹
CBMD, p. 331.

⁴²
Nathaniel Stow Probate #21780.

⁴³
Nathaniel Stow Probate #21779.

⁴⁴
Ibid.

⁴⁵
Ibid.

⁴⁶
NOTE: The newspaper notice of the auction in the Yeoman's Gazette, Oct. 4, 1828 calls the property the "Hardy Farm".

⁴⁷
Book 334, p. 182.

⁴⁸
CBMD, p. 269.

⁴⁸
Concord Free Library, Special Collections, Nathan Brooks Papers, Sarah Hardy Estate.

from 1821 until February of 1828.⁴⁹ In 1834 he sold his two-thirds interest in Lot 32, like his mother, to the firm of Rice and Merriam.⁵⁰

POST SCRIPT

From 1834 down to the present the chain of ownership is clear and easy to trace. A list of owners will be found in the Appendix. Of all of these seventeen owners, there are only two on which there is any documentation relating to the structures on Lot 32, Charles Bartlett and Joseph McArthur.

The period of Charles Bartlett's ownership is slightly confused. He bought the lot from John M. Walkup in 1838⁵¹ and sold it to Lewis P. Bartlett, a resident of West Cambridge, in 1841.^{52 53} But the Assessors' Records reveal that Charles Bartlett paid the

49

Probate #21779.

NOTE: This suggests that he had taken over his father's obligation to provide for Nathaniel Stow, but not as a legal obligation for which he probably would not have been reimbursed. This would have been about the time that Ebenezer Hardy was no longer able to carry out his agreement because of his precarious financial position.

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Book 334, p. 186.

51

Book 371, p. 442.

52

Concord Free Library, Assessors' Records, Microfilm, Roll T-1.

53

Book 406, p. 80.

taxes on the property until 1847,⁵⁴ so it would be safe to assume that he was its tenant. So Bartlett would have been on the property in 1843 and 1844, at which time he was caring for a sick woman, Hephzibah Lawrence, a town charge, who died in his house.⁵⁵ In accordance with legal procedure in such cases, several affidavits were taken from witnesses, one of which, a certain James Murdock, states that he cut wood for Bartlett during the winter, which he put in Bartlett's shed.⁵⁶ Unfortunately there is no other reference to the structures on the property, and it is not made clear whether the shed was specifically a wood shed or a larger, all purpose shed, attached to the house or separated from it.

Joseph A. McArthur bought the house from Wright Smith in 1872⁵⁷ but died the following year. In the inventory of the Probate, the property was referred to as a "Homestead Farm and Buildings."⁵⁸ Wright Smith, appointed administrator by the court, held an auction to pay the considerable debts against the estate. The newspaper notice of the auction states that the farm consisted of "about 20

54

Assessors' Records, Microfilm, Roll T-1.

55

Nathan Brooks Papers, Charles Bartlett Estate.

56

Ibid.

57

Book 1200, p. 151.

58

Probate #7187.

acres of good tillage land, with a house and two barns on the same." ⁵⁹ This was the only reference in any document to two barns on Lot 32 and I was unable to find out when it was built, or perhaps converted from a shed.

The property was undoubtedly used as a farm from its origins to the present. The owners are generally referred to as "yeomen." However, Wright Smith, who owned the property from 1864 until 1872, and again from 1873 to 1884, ⁶⁰ was apparently a school teacher, ⁶¹ so there is some doubt as to whether he farmed the land. At times the farm was bought for reasons of land speculation, ⁶² by Nathaniel Rice and Ephraim Merriam in 1834, ⁶³ by Lewis Bartlett in 1841, ⁶⁴ by Joseph Tavilla in 1927, and probably by Joseph Tavilla's wife Mary in 1936. ⁶⁵ It is likely that Mary Tavilla, at least, rented the farm during her nine year period of ownership.

59

Ibid.

60

Book 924, p. 165; Book 1200, p. 151; Book 1264, p. 639; Book 1662, p. 571.

61

Concord Free Library, Ruth Wheeler Collection, L-23.

62

Book 334, pp. 185-86.

63

Book 406, p. 80.

64

Book 5083, p. 537.

65

Book 6013, p. 10.

SUMMATION

This report is basically a compilation of documentary evidence, scanty as it is, relating to Lot 32. The attempt has been made to determine the approximate date of the house's construction, the likely number of rooms, the number and kind of outbuildings on the property, and the use of the land. There are no certain answers to these questions, but it is to be hoped that this report will provide the foundation for further archeological and architectural investigation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is obvious that such investigation is needed, when circumstances permit and if it proves feasible in both human and financial terms, if the house and grounds are to be restored to their 1775 condition. In order to establish accurately the number and placement of the outbuildings and to ascertain the original location of the house, the grounds must be searched for foundations by an archeologist. And it is further recommended that an architectural historian examine the existing structures for evidence of additions or changes.

Map of Concord in the Colonial Period.

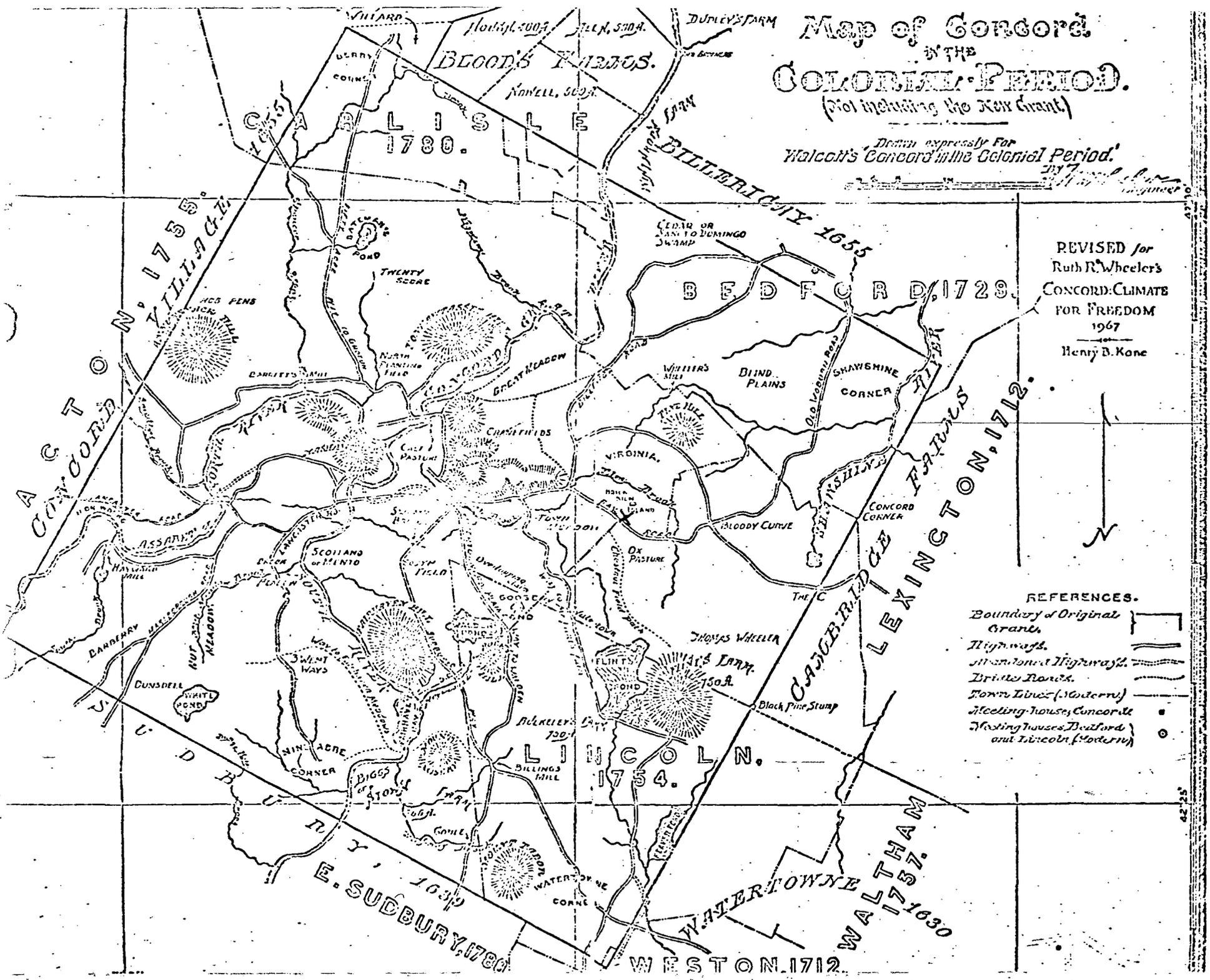
(not including the May Grant)

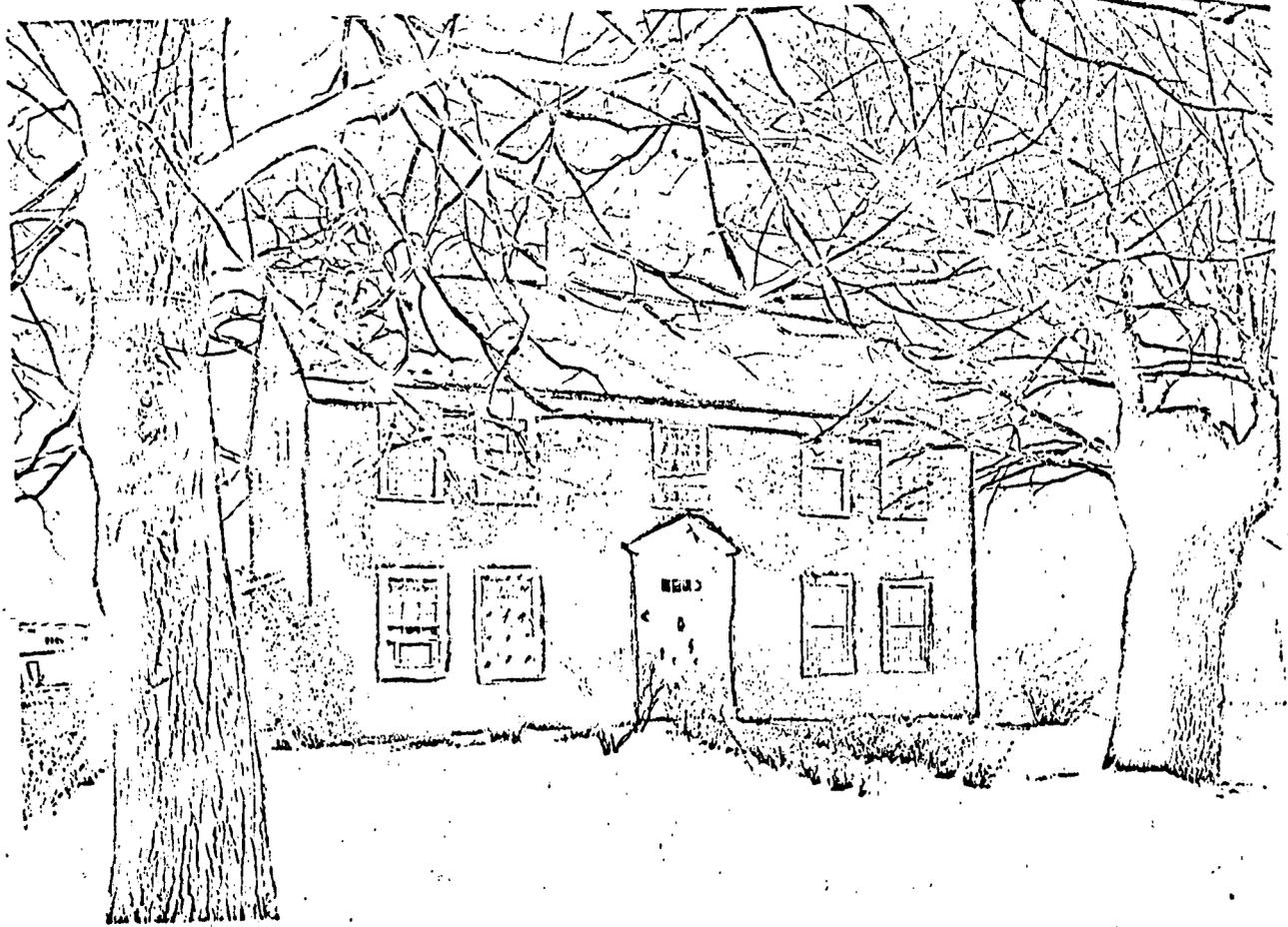
Drawn expressly for
Walcott's Concord in the Colonial Period.

REVISED for
Ruth R. Wheeler's
CONCORD: CLIMATE
FOR FREEDOM
1967
Henry B. Kane

REFERENCES.

- Boundary of Original Grant. [Solid line]
- Highway. [Double line]
- Unimproved Highway. [Dashed line]
- Drift Road. [Wavy line]
- Town Line (Modern). [Dotted line]
- Meeting-house, Concord. [Square with cross]
- Meeting-house, Bedford and Lincoln (Modern). [Circle]





View taken 1963

(substitute more recent
picture)

APPENDIX: OWNERSHIP OF THE STOW PROPERTY, 1834 to Present

- Rice and Merriam to John M. Walkup, April 1, 1835 (Book 340, p. 11).
John Walkup was married just before he bought the house (CBMD, p. 392) so it is possible that some changes and improvements were made on it when the Walkups took possession.
- John Walkup to Charles Bartlett, April 11, 1838 (Book 371, p. 442).
- Charles Bartlett to Lewis P. Bartlett, July 3, 1841 (Book 406, p. 80).
Charles Bartlett remained as tenant and payed taxes on the property until 1847 (Assessors' Records, Microfilm Roll T-1). After that year, Charles Bartlett is no longer paying the taxes which have been assumed by the owner, a resident of West Cambridge (*Ibid.*). There is no way of knowing if Charles Bartlett continued to rent the house or if Lewis Bartlett rented to someone else.
- Lewis Bartlett to Joseph Breck, Dec. 23, 1862 (Book 896, p. 485).
- Joseph Breck to George Clark II, April 3, 1863 (Book 904, p. 165).
- George Clark II to Wright Smith, April 16, 1864 (Book 924, p. 165).
- Wright Smith to Joseph A. McArthur, March 9, 1872 (Book 1200, p. 151).
- Wright Smith (Adm.) to George T. Smith, April 12, 1873 (Book 1264, p. 633).
Joseph McArthur had died intestate and Wright Smith petitioned to be appointed administrator for the reason that he was a creditor of McArthur. He was duly appointed. (Joseph A. McArthur Probate #7187).
- George Smith to Wright Smith, June 17, 1873 (Book 1264 p. 639).
- Jere Abbott to Frank S. Smith, April 21, 1884 (Book 1662, p. 571).
"Wright Smith did by mortgage deed, dated April 1, 1870, and recorded with Middlesex South District Deeds, libro 111, folio 119, convey the premises...to Henry Potter of Cambridge ...which said mortgage has been duly assigned to and is now held by Jere Abbott of Boston...." (*Ibid.*) Due to Wright Smith's forfeiture of the mortgage, the property was auctioned off.
- Frank S. Smith to Charles A. Sawyer, Oct. 17, 1887 (Book 1821, p. 324).
- Charles Sawyer to Merton Carty, Dec. 29, 1899 (Book 2790 p. 282).
- Merton Carty to George Williams, May 15, 1917 (Book 4136, p. 131).

George Williams to Joseph Tavilla, April 14, 1927 (Book 5083, p. 537).

Joseph Tavilla to Biagio Cacciola, Jan. 4, 1928 (Book 5187, p. 78).
Cacciola mortgaged the property to Tavilla (Ibid., p. 79).

Joseph Tavilla to Mary Tavilla, March 11, 1936 (Book 6013, p. 10).
Tavilla foreclosed on Cacciola's mortgage and auctioned the property (foreclosure recorded in Book 6005 p. 335). The notice in the Concord Herald, Feb. 6, 1936, reads like a foreclosure deed, giving only the acreage and boundaries of the property.

Mary Tavilla to Sarah and Hagop Hovagimian, June 29, 1945 (Book 6868, p. 337). In 1962 Sarah and Hagop Hovagimian deed the property to Hagop, Edward M. and Albert N. Hovagimian "to hold as joint tenants." (Book 9976, p. 69).

STOW GENEALOGY

Nathaniel Stow = Martha
(d. 1684) | (d. 1717)

Nathaniel = Ruth Meriam
(1663-1724) | (d. 1718)

Ebenezer = Abigail Parking
(b. 1668)

John Samuel Nathl
(1691- (b. (b. 1696)
1724) 1692)

Thomas Benjamin Jonathan
(b. 1698)(b. 1700)(b. 1705)

Amos Simon Nathan Ebenezer Ephraim Daniel
(1718)(1712)(1722) (1703) (1708)

Joseph = Eliz. Woolly
(d. without surviving heirs)
= Olive Jones (1724-1811)

Nathaniel
(1762-1832; no heirs)

Sarah = Ebenezer Hardy
(1760-1835) | (1761-1826)

Isaac = Betsy Draper
(1786-1834)

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REMARKS

One of the two most fruitful sources has been the Middlesex Registry of Deeds, where I traced the sequence of ownership, and Registry of Probate, housed in the same building where the Will of Nathaniel Stow, Sr. and the Probates of Nathaniel Stow, Jr., Joseph Stow, Nathaniel Stow, Sarah Hardy, and Joseph McArthur were enlightening. The other fruitful source of research materials was the Concord Free Library, where Mrs. Marcia Moss, Reference Librarian, was extremely generous with her time, help, and interest. In the library I tapped the following materials:

I. Microfilm

A. Newspapers

1. Middlesex Gazette, Nov. 2, 1816-Sept. 1, 1821.
2. Middlesex Observer, June 22, 1822-June 11, 1823.
3. Yeoman's Gazette, March 4, 1826-Nov. 10, 1832; Nov. 17, 1832-Nov. 3, 1838; Nov. 10, 1838-Dec. 31, 1841.
4. Concord Enterprise, Aug. 20, 1896-Dec. 29, 1898.
5. Concord Freeman, Nov. 9, 1838-Dec. 29, 1843; Dec. 11, 1834-Nov. 2, 1838.
6. Concord Transcript, June 20, 1885-Jan. 30, 1886.
7. Middlesex Freeman, Feb. 21, 1851-July 2, 1852.

B. Assessors' Records, Rolls T-1 and T-2.

C. Concord Town Records.

D. Ezra Ripley's "Marriages".

E. Ezra Ripley's "Deaths".

F. Massachusetts Federal Direct Tax, 1798.

II. Special Collections

- A. Concord Town Records, which included tax and property records.
- B. Concord Town Archives.
- C. Concord Births, Marriages, Deaths, 1635-1850. Boston: Beacon Press.
- D. Concord Births, Marriages and Deaths after 1850.
- E. Highway Rates of 1797.
- F. The Ruth Wheeler Collection, L-23.
- G. Nathan Brooks Papers.
- H. Papers and Pamphlets on the Centennial Celebration, 1875.
- I. Concord Newspapers from 1908:
 - Concord Journal
 - Concord Herald
 - Concord Enterprise
- J. Jarvis, Edward. Houses and People in Concord, 1810-1820. Typescript, 1915 (Annotated by Adams Tolman).
- K. Keyes, J.S. Houses in Concord. Typescript, 1885 (Annotated by Adams Tolman).
- L. Walcott, Charles. Notes on Concord Roads. Manuscript.
- M. Memoirs of the Social Circle in Concord. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1888.
- N. Coburn, Frank Warren. The Battle of April 19, 1775. Published by the author, 1912.

Of these, the primary sources were most helpful, as can be seen in the footnotes of this report. I found Mrs. Wheeler's notes some help as a starting point for research in the Registry of Deeds. Newspapers were not helpful, not only because, except in notices of auctions, the Stow house was never advertised for sale, but also because, unlike modern ads, little information was given about the property, and none about the house.

Secondary sources yielded nothing, because the Stow house was apparently never looked upon as historical in the sense of playing any role in note-worthy events. It was a common citizen, unassuming, unnoticed, keeping to himself, while the world passed by. It was a private house in every sense of the word. So, although the name of Stow crops up in Ruth Wheeler's, Concord, Climate for Freedom (Concord Antiquarian Society, 1967) only a bit about the early history of the family is given. The house is not mentioned in any of the accounts of the battle I read, such as Coburn's listed above, John Galvin's The Minute Men, or Allen French's The Day of Concord and Lexington, both in the Park Library. These accounts deal with the skirmish at Merriam's Corner and move on to the battle at Bloody Angle. Nor does the Correspondence of General Gage, edited by and published by Yale University (1931) mention the house. Other materials tapped in the Park were:

I. Library

- A. Hart, Albert Bushnell, ed. Commonwealth History of Massachusetts. New York: The States History Company, 1929.
- B. History of Middlesex County. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, Publishes, 1880.
- C. Walcott, Charles. Concord in the Colonial Period. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, Publishers, 1884.
- D. Lossing, Benson J. The Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution. New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1860.
- E. Austin, George Lowell. History of Massachusetts. Boston: B.B. Russell, 1885.
- F. Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War. Boston: Wright and Potter, State Printers, 1907.

II. Microfilm

- A. Middlesex County Records, Rolls 20-35.
- B. Middlesex Court of General Sessions, Rolls 17-19.
- C. Assessments and Real Estate Taxes, 1770, Roll 161.

III. Files

- A. "Taylor Lot" files.
- B. Farwell Jones House file.
- C. ~~not~~ Probates.
- D. Deeds.
- E. Note Card Files: Stow, Jones, and Taylor.
- F. Maps.

At the Massachusetts Archives in the State House I found more assessment records on microfilm (Volumes 35, 116, 130, 132) and at the Boston Public Library the Federal Census Records of 1790 (Roll 1), 1800 (Roll 17), 1810 (Roll 20), and 1820 (Roll 51). Neither the Massachusetts Historical Society nor the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities had any reference to the house or property. In fact no one had heard of it or any of its subsequent owners. The Concord Antiquarian Society had moved its manuscript collection to the Concord Library and had nothing more to offer. The County Court House proved barren, as did the Town Hall whose Archives are stored in the Concord Library. The old Concord Bank records, which are shockingly incomplete, are housed in the Old Sturbridge Village library, and proved sterile ground, as did the old records of the Middlesex Institution for Savings. Middlesex Mutual, originally the Middlesex

Fire Insurance Company founded in 1826, had discarded the old records some time ago. David McWalter, president of the insurance agency of the same name in Concord, believed he could locate some old Sanborn maps, but they, too, had disappeared.

The Notes I made on sources I found helpful are in the Park files.